

Reverend Ike

Frederick J. Eikerenkoetter II, better known as **Reverend Ike** (June 1, 1935 – July 28, 2009^[1]), was an American minister and electronic evangelist based in New York City. He was known for the slogan "You can't lose with the stuff I use!"^[2] His preaching is considered a form of prosperity theology.

Reverend Ike

Born

Frederick J.
Eikerenkoetter II
June 1, 1935
Ridgeland, South
Carolina

Died

July 28, 2009
(aged 74)
Los Angeles,
California

Nationality

American

Spouse(s)

Eula M. Dent

Website

www
.scienceoflivingonline
.com

Life and career

Frederick J. Eikerenkoetter II was born in Ridgeland, South Carolina to parents from the Netherlands Antilles, and was of African and Indo (Dutch-Indonesian) descent. He began his career as a teenage preacher and became assistant pastor at Bible Way Church in Ridgeland, South Carolina. After serving a stint in the Air Force as a Chaplain Service Specialist (a non-commissioned officer assigned to assist commissioned Air Force chaplains), he founded, successively,

the United Church of Jesus Christ for All People in Beaufort, South Carolina, the United Christian Evangelistic Association in Boston, Massachusetts, his main corporate entity, and the Christ Community United Church in New York City.



The "Palace Cathedral" is now known as the United Palace (2014). It is used as a live music venue as well as a church, and is still owned by the United Church Evangelistic Association.

Known popularly as "Reverend Ike," his ministry reached its peak in the mid 1970s, when his weekly radio sermons were carried by hundreds of stations across the United States.^[3] He was famous for his "Blessing Plan" – radio listeners sent him money and in return he blessed them. He said doing this would make radio listeners who did it more prosperous. He was criticised for his overt interest in financial remuneration.

"This is the do-it-yourself church," he would say tossing aside the Apostle Paul and channeling Ayn Rand. "The only savior in this philosophy is God in you."

When it came to the worship of Mammon, Rev. Ike was as transparent as they come. "It is the lack of money that is the root of all evil," he used to say. "The best thing you can do for

the poor is not to be one of them." Decades ahead of Oprah Winfrey and the author of "The Secret" in the mainstreaming of greed as a middle-class virtue, Rev. Ike's theology was indistinguishable from the fever dream of the most unrepentant capitalist: "Forget about the pie-in-the-sky; get yours here and now."^[3]

Rev. Ike bought the Loew's 175th Street Theatre movie palace in the Washington Heights neighborhood for over half a million dollars, renamed it the "Palace Cathedral" – although colloquially it was known as "Reverend Ike's Prayer Tower" – and had it fully restored. Restorations included the seven-story high, twin chamber Robert Morton organ.^[4] The "Miracle Star of Faith", visible from the George Washington Bridge, tops the building's cupola. In 2016, the building was designated as a landmark^[5] by the New York City Landmark Commission.

Rev. Ike was also the "chancellor" of the United Church Schools, including the Science of Living Institute and Seminary (which awarded him, his wife, and his son Doctor of the Science of Living degrees); the Business of Living Institute (home of Thinkonomics); and other educational projects.

Other activities

Ike made a guest appearance on Hank Williams, Jr.'s single "Mind Your Own Business", a Number One country music hit in December 1986. This song

is Reverend Ike's only chart single.^[6]

Family and death

Ike and his wife, Eula M. Dent, had one son, Xavier Eikerenkoetter. Reverend Ike died in Los Angeles at age 74 on July 28, 2009, after having not fully recovered from a stroke in 2007. His son gave a moving eulogy at his father's memorial service^[7] comparing his father to Martin Luther King and Malcolm X – as a "spiritual activist" and a liberator of minds. Xavier subsequently took over the church.^[8]

References

1. Lehmann-Haupt, Christopher (July 29, 2009). "Reverend Ike, Who Preached Riches, Dies at 74" . The New York Times.

2. Science of Living Online.

3. Norman, Tony (August 4, 2009). "The wretched, venal life of Rev. Ike" .

Pittsburgh Post-Gazette. Retrieved March 17, 2016. "...in the 1970s. His sermons from the pulpit of the United Church Science of Living Institute in New York could be heard on 1,770 radio and television stations across the

country. An estimated 2.5 million people tuned in every week”

4. "United Church: 'The Palace Cathedral'" in New York City Organ Project New York City Chapter of the American Guild of Organists

5. "United Palace Cathedral Gets Landmark Approval, Despite Church Opposition" . DNAinfo New York.

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6. Whitburn, Joel (2006). *The Billboard Book of Top 40 Country Hits*. Billboard Books. p. 288. ISBN 0-8230-8291-1.

7. *giftofmoney (2010-02-04), Bishop Xavier: "Rev. Ike was a liberator of minds!" , retrieved 2017-04-06*

8. *Associated Press "Reverend Ike, Preacher of Material Prosperity, Dies at 74" , Huffington Post, July 30, 2009; retrieved December 26, 2011.*

External links

- Science of Living Online
- Rev. Ike Ministries

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